

TRACING THE EVOLUTION OF DIGITAL MARKETING FROM THE 1980s

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to explore the different stages of technological progress that have shaped the evolution of digital marketing, and to understand how companies have been able to benefit from these advancements. By examining the history of digital marketing, businesses can gain the knowledge and skills necessary for future success. This paper will provide a chronological analysis of the key technological discoveries and inventions that have influenced digital marketing, beginning with the first desktop computer (IBM, 1981), the emergence of the first web browser (Netscape), and the development of the internet. We will examine how these technologies have propelled digital marketing to its current level in 2022, and investigate the factors that have led to its evolution. We will also explore how digital marketing can be advantageous and easier to implement for companies, enabling them to communicate with customers more effectively and adapt to their needs in real time and in the right place.

Keywords: internet, CRM, digital technology, online/offline marketing

1 INTRODUCTION

One of the main goals of this research is to show how much the technology has evolved, but also the factors that influenced it, how the marketing strategies of the companies have changed with the technological development, moving from the offline environment to the online one. We will make a brief presentation of the main technological discoveries, which are in the hands of some visionaries, have contributed step by step to the transformation of digital marketing, from manual digital marketing to automatic digital marketing, respectively CRM (custom relationship management).

In the beginning, the phone was a communication device between two people, but today the phone has become a very complex device, with very varied functions, and due to these complexities, the companies that launch in online campaigns without thinking of developing their sites which are also responsive (sites can be accessed from the phone), or Google display campaigns, areas non-existent and have "hope" for very low-performance indices.

We expect to arrive at some obvious results, showing that the development of digital marketing has as a main reason the development of technology, we talk here about the emergence of the first personal computer,

the development of storage spaces (Ram), the development of search engines, but also the appearance in 2008 of the first smartphone, and in 2020 we can talk about video streaming companies (Netflix), which together with digital marketing companies have come to real-time marketing of this platform.

They have been born or a series of interesting digital, international and Romanian marketing communities, who want to inform about everything new in this field. Here we can mention Seth Godin, Zelist.ro, FaceBrands.ro, Smartinsight.com, founded by digital marketing guru, David Chaffey, Statista, Marketingcharts.com, Hubspot.com.

The article presents current and future trends in digital marketing and the content is based on secondary data. Different articles, researches, reports, various websites have been studied. The current research is focused on the evolution of digital marketing, how this evolution was possible, and at the same time, we will analyse theoretical as well as practical aspects that have led to the development of digital marketing.

„Due to the development of mobile devices, smartphones, tablets, and social platforms, business people will need new business models and a new perception of marketing. The emergence of mobile devices has led to better communication but also better customer satisfaction for each of them” (Birzu, 2019).

2 DIGITAL MARKETING AND HOW IT HAS EVOLVED

According to the World Marketing Association, marketing represents the amount of actions, creation processes, communication processes, delivery and exchange of offers that have value for customers, partners, and society (Ama.com, 2013). With the increase of the number of Internet users, at the moment all over the world are from sources provided by the ones from the "Internet World Stats" about 4,574

billion users, that is 58,7 % of the total population of the world (Internetworldstats, 2020), the companies had to change their marketing strategies and move from traditional, one-way marketing to digital marketing, to marketing where consumers can interact with the brand.

Table 1. History and Growth of the Internet from 1995 until Today (Compiled by author)

Date	Number of Users	% World Population
December 1995	16 million	0,4%
December 2000	361 million	5,8%
December 2004	817 million	12,7%
December 2008	1,407 billion	21,1%
December 2011	2,267 billion	33,3%
December 2020	4,574 billion	58,7%

As the number of Internet users increased, digital marketing techniques were also diversified. We can say that digital marketing is that model of advertising, transmitted through digital channels such as social media, mobile applications, email, search engines, websites or other digital channels and more simplified, digital marketing represents that type of marketing, of a product or service involving electronic devices (NeilPateil.com, 2020). Another interesting definition is a pledge from nobody other than David Caffey, who tells us that digital marketing is the fulfillment of marketing goals with the help of technology

(SmartInsights.com, 2019). For the first time, the term digital marketing was mentioned in the early '90s.

If we talk about the first digital marketing strategy, we can talk about the campaign of the magazine Wired, but in electronic form at HotWired.com, which on October 27, 1994, put on a web page, the first electronic banner in the world. This is a campaign to promote the AT&T telecommunications company. The idea was a real success, and 44% of those who saw the advertisement also accessed the online banner (TheGuardian.com, 213).

Another initiative to move from traditional marketing to digital marketing was the initiative of the ACTs who tried marketing databases, in 1986 and developed the first client management software, manually at that time, this being the precursor of the consecrated CRM. The pioneers of this field were Robert Kestenbaum and Robert Saw, who found a solution to have a record of the clients of the companies, adding in their software the possibility of having statistics on direct sales, managing marketing resources.

In 1999 the management software with the clients became automation, we refer here to the establishment of Salesforce, and the implementation of SaaS (software as a service) technology (Kapost.com, 2020). In 1998, Google launched its website, changed the buying behavior of customers, customers began to find information about their favorite products using Google.

A new company strategy called web 2.0 is emerging, whereby websites need to be more interactive. Google AdSense appears that allows you to monitor the site but also to see the behavior of those who visit your site through Google Analytics (Digitalvydia.com, 2018). Digital marketing will never be the same again with the advent of smartphones. Phones and marketing campaigns on the phone have been, we can remember here the company of Universal Music, but last but not least, there is talk of the emergence of iPhone in 2007, when companies

had to change their marketing strategies, and the companies' needs had to be accessed from the smartphone. (Online.uwa.edu,2019) Marketing strategies become AGILE, an AGILE campaign, represents how well they perform their marketing campaigns (Digitalmarketinginstitute.com, 2020).

Currently, today 2020, companies engaged in digital marketing like "Mirriad", have come to use artificial intelligence (AI), managing to market video streaming platforms (Netflix, HBO GO, Amazon Prime Video), having data platform user preferences, during a movie, documentary, etc., can place specific logos or advertisements on walls, neutral areas, without affecting the quality of the video experience (StartupCafe, 2020). At the same time, if we remember the digital outdoor marketing, supported by LED technology, companies like Digital OOH have been separated, allowing you to change the advertising message (Mitan, 2019).

3 TECHNOLOGIES THAT HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE EVOLUTION OF DIGITAL MARKETING

The Internet has deep roots since the 1960s, but you cannot mention that the "Internet" or "world wide web" was invented by researcher Tim Berners-Lee when he wanted to connect the computers of the nuclear research institute (Online.uwa.edu.com, 2020). The development of technology and the emphasis on innovation were the main reasons for the evolution of digital marketing (Digitalvydia, 2018).

As shown in Figure 1(Compiled by author), there are three important phases in the development of digital marketing in the '80s, as inventory of personal computer by IBM, ANSI adopted SQL as a standard and the storage memory of a computer has increased to 100 Megabits.

When we talk about technology that led to the development of digital marketing, we cannot talk about the emergence of the first browser

Netscape (1994). Also, in the same year, they appeared on the market and the search engines from Yahoo and in 1997 the one from Google. Due to this technological advancement, the first online businesses were a normal consequence and a gold mine for marketers, consumers changing their purchasing and information behavior.

In 1994 the Amazon company appeared on the market and in 1995 the eBay (Digitalmarketinginstitute.com, 2019). In 1995 the term "SEO" (search engine optimization) appears and refers to the optimization of the content of a site for the search engines (the size of the titles on the web page, the size of the photos (Adwiz.ro,2020). Google empire announces its emergence in 1998, "Microsoft" launches "MSN", one of the most popular social interaction software and Yahoo launches his search engine, "Yahoo! Web Search" (Digitalvydia.com, 2018). Once reached the age of web 2.0 and social networks, users changed their behavior, getting involved in interacting with others as well as with brands (Digitalu.ro, 2020).

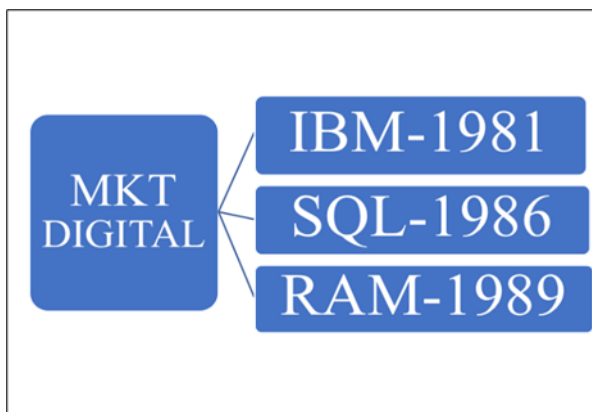


Figure 1. Technologies that have contributed to the development of digital marketing

In 2001, the ones from Universal launched the first campaign on mobile phones, and in the following years, new social media networks like "LinkedIn" (2003) and "Facebook" in 2004 come

from behind. Also in 2004, "Gmail" entered the market and in the following year "YouTube". For marketers, only the sky could be the limit, due to the diversification of channels through which they could reach customers. In 2007, the "iPhone" enters the market, which opens the way for smartphones and digital marketing through applications.

Marketing will never be the same again because mobile phone users are growing, brands must change the structure of their sites to be accessible from the phone. In 2008, the „Google Chrome" browser was launched on the market, and in 2010 the term "Responsive Web Design" (RWD) was introduced, whereby the website adapts to the user device. The search engines have pine algorithms that read the content of a site. In 2018, those involved in the evolution put on the market a new protocol, "Mobile First Index", whereby the speed of loading a site on a tablet or phone becomes a prime factor for Google (Adviz.com, 2020).

4 CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, I showed that digital marketing could not develop without the evolution of the internet and technology, and the increase in the importance of digital marketing is directly proportional to the evolution and innovation in technology.

In the end, the most successful will be the consumer, who can be better informed and at the same time, the companies will know what their customers want, as well as what they do wrong in their relationship with them. Through digital marketing, customers will no longer be interrupted, as in traditional marketing, reacting when they want and through what channels they want to the brand. Companies that will digitize their internal processes, will know what is the role of each department in the company and what is the contribution of each to the good satire company. Firms that will focus on digital marketing will have better communication with

their customers, lower marketing budgets, but also greater risks in terms of securing their customer's data (Wmegroup.com, 2019).

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